

Henry James:
Washington Square

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INTRODUCTION

Usually many critics of James's work have divided Henry James's life of writing into three periods for convenience. Some of them have even called those three periods, 'James I, James II, and James the Old Pretender', respectively.¹⁾ The name of the Old Pretender seems to come from James's obstinate attitude to life, and his elaborate and exquisite style, and his trial to pursue the precision and accuracy of expression found in his later works. But his earlier style is fresh, clear, and not hard. According to many critics, the first period begins in 1865 and lasts until 1882. *Washington Square* belongs to this first period. 'It was serialized in the *Cornhill Magazine* from June through November 1880.'²⁾ Henry James, however, had gestated a certain great plan for these ten years. He had tried to make money, though it was not very necessary to James, by writing some short stories, or a few novels, or a comment in order to work on a long great novel seriously and thoroughly. This long novel was *The Portrait of a Lady* which has been always recognized as the best masterpiece of all the books in his middle period. As a matter of course, *Washington Square* is one of them for earning a living like *Confidence* or *The Europeans*. *Confidence* seemed to be a lighter, ordinary and second-rate comedy of manners, so it was not applauded at all. But *Washington Square* seems to have been popular among the readers of James's. By now enduring value has been to some extent demonstrated by the excellent dramatic version and a tolerable translation into images on celluloid named *The Heiress* after he died. On the contrary, James himself thought

that this novel was a trifling, plain and monotonous work of banality and lacked of the significant and experimental worth which showed clearly and skillfully in his better works. Some readers also may feel that *Washington Square* finds no place among James's success. This is not, of course, to be ranked with his greatest works—*The Ambassadors*, *The Wings of the Dove*, *The Golden Bowl*—but I think this is a recognisable true of the small, gracefully proportioned, and lowtoned masterpiece, that's to say, it is successful, within its more limited sphere, by reason of the property with which it limns American manners. 'It is a tale purely American.'³⁾ When we compare *Washington Square* with *Huckleberry Finn*, the latter is supposed much greater than the former at once. But when it comes to writing American character, they are nearly equal. 'The character is felt at Washington Square as well as on the banks of the Mississippi.'⁴⁾ On the whole, *Washington Square* is filled with 'the extraordinary charm like a Mozartian combination of sweetness and depth.'⁵⁾

The plot of this story is very simple. Henry James was said to sometimes take the skeltons of his stories from his friends. Here he got the hint from his friend, Mrs. Kemble who was the famous actress and conversationalist. Reading his notebook, we are led to think that this should be correctly and clearly called the skelton rather than the hint. The characters playing here resemble Catherine Sloper and Morris Townsend in *Washington Square*. But James covered the given skelton with his own clothes and embroidered somewhere to fit it to an entirely different background and the milieu out of his own experience. How did James do with the raw material in *Washington Square*? I think there are three points to be thought here. The first point is the development or the improvement of Catherine's mind and soul, which is most important. The second one is how the theme of his 'international situation' is treated, for almost his earlier works light on this problem. The third is the problem of his ambiguity.

CHAPTER I

First, I try the first point-how the development of Catherine's mind was achieved. Before studying this development directly, it might be better to analyze the characters surrounding Catherine and understand them completely. There are a few figures around her. Her father, Dr. Sloper, her aunts, Mrs. Penniman and Mrs. Almond, and her only lover, Morris Townsend are main characters. Anyway they become, more or less, obstacles and barriers to Catherine. She has to affront them in the progression of her character.

Then, first, what kind of obstacle is Dr. Sloper to her? He was a distinguished physician in New York. He got a good reputation. First Henry James introduced him as a clever, honest, and witty man. The more important and noticable thing is that he was a philosopher and observer. Henry James emphasizes Dr. Sloper's clairvoyance and cleverness. He felt as if he consisted of only these two elements. For example, when Dr. Sloper called on Mrs. Montgomery, Morris's sister, she was astonished at his clairvoyance. He stated his clear-cut opinions to her as follows:

"...the sign of the type in question is the determination-to accept nothing of life but its pleasures, and to secure these pleasures chiefly by the aid of your complaisant sex...."⁶⁾

Not hearing anything about Morris's dissipation directly from her, he said affirmatively,

"You have suffered immensely for your brother."

The tears sprung for a moment to Mrs. Montgomery's eyes.

"I don't know you have found that out!" she exclaimed.

"By a philosophic trick-by what they call induction....", he answered calmly.⁷⁾

When he met and talked with Morris, he perceived Morris's character for a minute. He thought proudly his physiognomy depended upon his thirty year's study. To the last moment, his clairvoyance had not declined. How did his clairvoyance and cleverness influence

Catherine's life and happiness? While they didn't have anything to do with her directly at her childhood, they did not wrong to her so much. Only his cleverness gave birth to his ironical and cynical tone to her. But sometimes he looked humorous, because he had been curious about the matters. He observed everything which had occurred one after another, with his clairvoyance and cleverness. He said to Mrs. Almond as follows, after he knew that Catherine distressed herself with the alternative affection.

...the two things are extremely mixed up, and the mixture is extremely odd. It will produce some third element, and that's what I am waiting to see. I wait with suspense with positive excitement: ...⁸⁾

In the beginning, he enjoyed watching how those young people were going on, even though he disapproved Morris as his son-in-law. But as soon as this clairvoyance and cleverness were connected with his authority of a father, he began to take action instead of only being the observer. He began to use the authority which he had hidden for a long time. Then, he began to reveal his real figure which was not described by James around at the first half. From the beginning he was selfish, affectionless and merciless. He was 'shocking cold-blooded'⁹⁾ and 'a great autocrat'¹⁰⁾ as Mrs. Almond called.

When Catherine went to his study in order to get a permission to meet Morris again, he treated her like a stranger with his cold eyes. He asked her as follows:

"Do you wish to make me very happy?"¹¹⁾

"Yes, it is to give him up."

And he went to the door and opened it for her to go out. The movement gave her a terrible sense of his turning off.

"...if you see him, you will be ungrateful, cruel child: you will have given your old father the greatest pain of his life...."¹²⁾

Dr. Sloper was assured of himself so perversely that he looked like an unreal person and seemed to be an evil or sometimes to be a ghost in the latter half of this book, especially when he took his daughter to a lovely valley of the Alps and persuaded her to give

up Morris in vain. Henry James described the lonely with conversation of the two people. This hard and melancholy dell abandoned by the summer light was fit for the scene of the confrontation between Dr. Sloper and her daughter. Actually he unmasked himself a little at this scene:

Then, abruptly, in a low tone, he asked her an unexpected question, "Have you given him up?"

"No, father", she answered. "I am very angry.... I am not a very good man. Though I am very smooth externally, at bottom I am very passionate: and I assure you I can be very hard.... I have been raging inwardly for the last six months.", he said.¹³⁾

At the night before they embarked for New York, he told his real feeling to Catherine, which showed his unmerciful selfishness.

"...your value is twice acquired, with all the knowledge and taste that you have acquired. A year ago, you were perhaps a little limited—a little rustic: but now you have seen everything, and you will be a most entertaining companion. We have fattened the sheep for him before he kills it."¹⁴⁾

Really he was right about the character of Townsend, he was right about his own character, he was right about the character of Catherine, he was right about the character of Mrs. Penniman. He sometimes said confidently that he was right after all and it was a great pleasure to be in the right. But his cleverness and clairvoyance were so appalling that I wondered if he had human feelings even a little bit.

Unfortunately to Catherine he was not right as a father. Only he was all cleverness and could not understand her daughter as a man.

This cleverness and clairvoyance connected with his authority spoiled his daughter's innocent affections entirely. Besides this excessive intelligence without paternal affection, there are two other features which destroyed his daughter's heart and wounded her mind. One of them was his view point of women. His ideal woman should be the beauty of reason, that is, his late wife. She was

amiable, graceful, accomplished, elegant, charming and pretty. She was the typical beauty of reason. 'He had never been dazzled by any feminine characteristics whatever.'¹⁵⁾ But his daughter was not beautiful, but plain, dull and unattractive. Catherine could not belong to the category of Dr. Sloper's splendid women. He always thought her as an unmarrigiable girl and ignored her abilities. The other point was his own self-reproach. He lost his first child and his wife nearly at the same time. If he had not been engaged in healing other persons, it would not have mattered so much. Though his patients and his neighbor did not blame him at all, 'he walked under the weight of this very private censure for the rest of his days, and bore forever the scars of a castigation to which the strongest hand he knew, had treated him on the night that followed his wife's death.'¹⁶⁾ When this failure, though it had not been said considerably for a long time, was said afterward by one of his sisters, he looked fierce like a fearful evil. He had tried to restore his honor in his mind for himself. He became more rigid and hard because of this self-reproach. Eventually his own clairvoyance and excellent intellect were sharpened more and more by his past blunder. They blended queerly and then made him lose his daughter. He could not understand a normal woman, nor think out any good ways of dissolving that kind of problem. When James wrote this kind of character, he almost seemed to be a ghost or something like this and lose his precious thing. What is this kind of person? He is always right, tries to be right and pretends anyway to be right proudly. He has a kind of authority to someone and then he is, more or less, selfish. In consequence, he makes a victim of someone maliciously. He has his hidden secret which is morally worse and he is always living under the severe burden sternly. For example, Mme de Cintré of *The American* used her strong power to her daughter, who was afraid of her mother as Catherine was afraid of her father, and prohibited forcedly her daughter form

getting married with Newman, an American businessman. This French rigid, hard, and old lady kept the secret to herself which, revealed by her late husband's will, was that she had killed her husband with her son when he had been ill in bed. Another example is Mr. Osbond of *The Portrait of a Lady*. He got married with Isabel Archer. After the marriage, he disclosed his selfishness, he became a victim to Isabel. He, from the first time, knowing she had much money, intended to get it for his only daughter, Pansy. Dr. Sloper like them made a prey of her daughter. He succeeded in his belief in person to the full, but he strayed far off the right course of father.

Next, how did Catherine's aunts influence her? Mrs. Penniman was a widow of a poor clergyman without children and fortune. When Catherine was ten years old, she came to Dr. Sloper's to take charge of her niece's education as a duena. She was an amiable disposition and very gentle. But the most important and noticeable character was that she was all romantic and sentimental extravagantly. James lays stress on only her romantic quality so much that she became a queer fish completely. She was nothing but romantic will. She could not do with things reasonably, and responsibly. She was such a humbug that she could not make Catherine understand a fact as it was. She was far from instructing Catherine at all. She herself was fascinated by Morris just as well as Catherine. 'She satisfied her love for Morris by attempting to force the marriage with Catherine Sloper.'¹⁷⁾

Catherine was changing at least for the better, but her aunt was not. She was always quite a girlish figure and she was officious, imaginative and impetuous. One day she even allowed Morris to enter Dr. Sloper's study and see his things to his heart's content while Dr. Sloper and Catherine were taking a trip to Europe. She didn't know Catherine's respect to her father. By this time she was absolutely paralysed as her aunt. After all she put Catherine into

complications meddlesomely and fled away.

Next, how about Mrs. Almond? She was the wife of a prosperous merchant, and the mother of a blooming family. She didn't seem to have any family trouble at all, which was one reason why she settled down calmly. Mrs. Almond entered sometimes and talked with her brother about Mrs. Penniman, Catherine, and Morris. She observed those characters closely. She could observe everything just like a keen critic. Mrs. Penniman was afraid of her brother, but Mrs. Almond was not at all. On the contrary, she accused with a piercing eye, Dr. Sloper for his cold-bloodedness. She criticized her sister so much and she thought Mrs. Penniman a foolish goose. Of course, she was dead against Mr. Townsend, for she knew his dissipation from Aurther Townsend. But she was very sorry for Catherine, because she understood how Catherine was sorely perplexed with the problems of having to choose her father or Morris. She was the most reasonable character of all in this book. Unfortunately Mrs. Almond, however, did not do any good to Miss Sloper, for she always observed everything, having nothing to do with the matter, but she didn't behave at all. Though she had a proper and good opinion, she would not try to put it into practice. She only offered her opinions to Mrs. Penniman and Dr. Sloper. She was one of typical observers who are found in James's works. The observers stand constantly at the edge of life and will not take part in it. Though they are impressed by the play, they will never become the players. Rowland Mallet of *Roderick Hudson*, Mr. Tristram of *The American* and Mrs. Almond are observers. The observers don't injure other people, so Mrs. Almond was not an obstacle, but after all, nothing to poor Catherine.

The last character around Catherine, is Morris Townsend. He was very intelligent and mercenary. He was making advances to Catherine in order to get her much money. For this purpose he endured through thick and thin the foolish Penniman and the dull

Catherine. James described him definitely as a venal man to the end. He could not accept truly Catherine's sincere faith. It's needless to say that he did wrong to Catherine.

Then I arrive at the principal point in this book. How did Catherine grow among those peculiar and troublesome adults? She was born as a disappointment to Dr. Sloper. When she was only three years old, she lost her mother unhappily. Dr. Sloper wanted Catherine to be more clever than good. She was good. But she did not conform to his view point of lady, that's to say, the beauty of the reason. She could not delight her father, namely he could not be proud of his daughter. When she became a girl, she was not ugly but plain, dull with a gentle countenance and moral purity. She was good, obedient, docile, affectionate and much addicted to speaking the truth. This 'speaking the truth' doesn't mean she was rather talkative like other women, but she was so shy, quiet and irresponsible that she was thought stolid. And she gave even an impression of insensibility. Moreover, she was simple. James emphasized her simplicity, so that we thought she was an entire simpleton. In fact, she didn't know her father's disappointment. Only she believed, loved, and respected Dr. Sloper. 'Her deepest desire was to please him and her conception of happiness was to know that she succeeded in pleasing him.'¹⁸⁾ Dr. Sloper was too clever for Catherine to ask him something. She had only to listen to him and be intoxicated with his dignity and grandeur blindly. He was much more than she could talk together. Until she became about 20 years old, he presumed her a weak-minded girl. But she was not so weak as her father thought. She gradually knew how to make an indirect answer, though she had been so far too honest to tell a lie. It was from the time when she saw Morris Townsend at the party which was held at Mrs. Almond's. She began to be courageous little by little. Then, burdensome problems got in the way. Dr. Sloper was dead against Morris as a son-in-law. He hated him

fiercely, though he admitted his abilities and did as a companion. Miss Sloper could not perceive the other concealed side of Morris which Dr. Sloper pointed out. Then, she sat alone in her room and meditated. But the sensation caused by Morris was rather an obstacle than an aid to reflection. Catherine's meditation was very different from the one of the intelligent Isabel. Everytime she had her paintaking problems, she pondered over them as well as Isabel Archer. But this soft, simple-minded Catherine could not turn the situation into a better one. She remained the same for a long time. Actually she could not know why Morris was disapproved in spite of his neatness and the nobleness of expression. But only thinking of opposing to her father was to her fearful. Then she stopped seeing Morris and only wrote letters to him. And then she found the delight in being filial to Dr. Sloper, instead. There was a great excitement in trying to be a good daughter. But it never entered into her mind to throw her lover off. She, who could not think of a good idea, only tried to assure herself that there would be a peaceful way out of their difficulty. 'She had only had an idea that if she should be very good, the situation would in some mysterious manner improve.'¹⁹⁾ Catherine expected a good deal of Heaven Catherine didn't have her mother to consult with, so she could not help relying upon Mrs. Penniman considerably, though she could only while Catherine was younger. She gradually make out what kind of woman Mrs. Penniman was. At last her romantic meddlesomenes made Catherine get angry. To our surprise, it was almost first time she had ever felt angry. At that time she was 21 years old. From this time on she could say what she thought in her mind. She became rather dry, cold and irresponsive. She decided to make no concession. She emerged from her old and softminded bashfulness and became very hard and rigid like her father. Yet she was still simple. After talking with her father, she had already decided not to marry Morris if he would be really selfish just as Dr. Sloper

had said. She had not perceive even one bad point of Morris yet. 'She had made up her mind that it was wrong to make a parade of her trouble and to endeavor to act upon her father by the mysterious aid of emotion.'²⁰) She began to lead a disguised life, because of her father's perverseness. But she had continued to respect her father as ever, who was angry at his daughter's engagement and had not spoken to Catherine after that time, though this was also a plan of Dr. Sloper's. Meanwhile she was waiting that Dr. Sloper would be reconciled and understand her lover more correctly. But the present situation didn't seem to turn out better.

Catherine's days were dismal. As Mrs. Almond said, Catherine didn't take many impressions, but when she took one, she kept it. She was not flexible, nor versatile. In consequence, violating her father's wish seemed to her that she had no right to enjoy his protection, for she could by no means give up the young man, and she chose him instead of Dr. Sloper, then she thought she must leave home.

She thought that if she lived with Dr. Sloper she must obey him. When Dr. Sloper was going to take Catherine to Europe to make her forget Morris, she had already stood firm. She had the idea that going abroad and get remaining firm, she should play him a trick. Around this time Dr. Sloper perceived that he had underestimated Catherine. When she was taken to the wild valley of the Alps in the chilly afternoon and sat alone in the stillness. Nearly ignored by her father, she thought only of Morris and held firm, though she felt loneliness of separating from Dr. Sloper for ever. She felt angry at her father first whom she had so far respected so much when she was despised by him. At that time she tried to defend the rejected Morris. She thought that she was now absolved from penance and might do what she chose.

As she took only one impression, she would not understand what Dr. Sloper said about Morris and why he said that Dr. Sloper

was not a good man. She had not grown wise enough to think about her own happiness from many parts yet. She thought it only from one side. Her eyes were supposed to be closed to the things which were against her own happiness. But at the same time they could not search it absolutely. She could not have helped being said that she had been simple as usual. Her later hardness came from this simpleness. She lost nearly her father. Her mother had died for a long time, though she did not perceive it.

Next she took her courage to live on without her father. She longed for the company of some intelligent person of her own sex to give her comfort. But unfortunately when she arrived at Washington Square, she found her romantic aunt much more unreasonable.

Aunt Penniman gave her pain rather than comfort. She said to Catherine as soon as she returned:

"I have seen a great deal of him. He is not very easy to know. I suppose you think you know: but you don't, my dear. . . . You will someday: but it will only be after you have lived with. . . . It's a wonderful character, full of passion and energy, and just as true. . . . He used to sit in your father's study. . . . He liked to look at the books, and at all those things in the glass cases. . . ."21)

Catherine hearing her aunt's explanation, 'a certain dryness fell upon the girl's emotion.'²²⁾ And her sense of Mrs. Penniman's innocent falsity began to haunt her again. She had already given up her father, but she felt that his sacred study was profaned by Morris's entering it. She could no longer believe her aunt. It seemed to Catherine that her aunt's meddling character spoiled her happiness. She was going to lose Mrs. Penniman, too. The grand tour truly made her more positive, more mature and braver. She noticed herself changed.

"I have given it up. I shall never bring him around, and I expect nothing now. . . . I have been braver than I was. . . . I have changed very much. . . ."23)

She felt separated from her father, but she could be all there as a daughter because of her firm belief of Morris's love for Catherine.

But, to her sorrow, she lost her lover unhappily and unexpectedly, who knew that she was disinherited and had not so much money. When she was about to be abandoned, she spoke more forcibly and volubly and became frigid and even haughty, for she had given up everything for Morris. Mrs. Penniman seemed to Catherine more and more wicked. 'A consummate sense of her aunt's meddling folly had come over her and she was sickened at the thought that Mrs. Penniman had been let loose, as it were, upon her happiness.'²⁴) All she had to help her was the determination to make no appeal to the compassion of her father and aunt. Now that she lost her father, her aunt and her lover, there are no people for Catherine to rely on.

She averted herself rigidly from the idea of marrying others. Catherine had been deeply and incurably wounded. Dr. Sloper didn't know Catherine's deep wound. Catherine formed habits, interested herself in charitable institutions, asylums, hospitals, and aid societies to compete with the void of her deserted mind.

'From her own point of view the great facts of her career were that Morris Townsend had trifled with her affection, and that her father had broken its spring. There was something dead in her life, and, her duty was to try and fill the void.... Nothing could alter these facts; nothing could ever make her feel toward her father as she felt in her young years....'²⁵)

She would not say that she could promise Dr. Sloper not to get married with Mr. Townsend. She knew herself that she was obstinate, but to be obstinate to her father gave her a certain joy. Catherine became very strict to what was wrong to her. She was completely alone. After her father's death, Morris appeared before Catherine again to get at least some money by succeeding in getting married with her. But she would not accept him at all. Driving out Morris, Catherine continued her fancy work. She could be positive and hard but she could not be flexible. Her simplicity had

not disappeared to the last. It turned into the inflexibility. Catherine Sloper was not a person of high intelligence by nature, so we could not see her soul grow so intellectual and high. But she confronted the evils which were getting in her way and fought them.

Though she lost her lover, her father, and her aunt, she avoided making any concession and she continued to live in her own determined attitude.

CHAPTER II

James didn't try his own experiment in *Washington Square*. There was not a definite character playing a part of 'view of point'. This story was a first person narrative. There was a person who was almighty and told this story. This person calling himself 'I' existed from the very first. But, thinking carefully and profoundly, he sometimes could not assure us completely what happened in the minds of all characters. Sometimes he, understanding those events and changes, let things go with folded arms among the characters. I think James's famous peculiar ambiguity came from this. James was very good at irritating us by prolonging the correct information of more important things. For example, the characterization of Morris Townsend. This story-teller told us Morris's appearance when he entered on this story first.

...in company with a tall young man... who was remarkably handsome. He was tall and slim, but he looked extremely strong. ...he was a great stranger in New York. It was his native place.... He had been knocking about the world, and living in queer corners; he had only come back a month or two before... he seemed so sincere, so natural....²⁶⁾

These explanations were only what this 'I' told us. Marian, Catherine's cousin, said that Morris was so terribly conceited. When Morris and Arthur Townsend visited Catherine's home one day,

Aurther told Catherine that Morris was very sociable, he wanted to know everyone, he was so brilliant and Aurther knew some people that called his cousin 'too clever',²⁷⁾ But Morris looked much 'refined' to²⁸⁾ Catherine and Mrs. Penniman. Morris Townsend had struck Mrs. Penniman as a young man of great force of character, and of remarkable powers of satire—a keen, resolute, brilliant, nature. Mrs. Penniman said also that he was 'imperious',²⁹⁾ To Catherine, Morris was just like a young knight in a poem. These conversations, which were not proved true by James, made us think Morris rather good man and nice as they said. The story of Morris developed just like a drama. Meanwhile there were not persons who showed us Morris correctly.

Next, Mrs. Almond said that Morris had been wild, only he was lazy and he was in the navy. She also said that his theory was that he had trodden the world with a little money. He had lately come back to America with the intention, as he told Aurther of the beginning life in earnest. It might be possible that his motives were pure. As I said before, James appeared only once when he introduced Morris to us. Since that time he had disappeared and James's characters were only talking about Morris. Among them, Dr. Sloper seemed to take James's part concerning the character of Morris. What was Dr. Sloper's observation of Morris, then? Anywhere Dr. Sloper thought that Morris was a complete fortune-hunter and mercenary. He told us as follows:

"He had ability.... He has the assurance of the devil himself. He had a good head.... He is not a gentleman.... He is not what I call a gentleman.... He has not the soul of one.... ...he is extremely insinuating.... It's a vulgar nature.... He is a plausible coxcomb.³⁰⁾ He is amazingly conceited.³¹⁾

But James didn't assure us those statements, so we didn't know whether Morris was really bad as Dr. Sloper said, or not. Then we were involved in something ambiguous. Morris said by himself that he was very natural, too proud, and too sensitive. When he met Dr.

Sloper and was placed in the evil category of Dr. Sloper's physiognomy, he confessed that he had been an idler and he had been wild and been foolish. But he was not accepted but despised by Dr. Sloper. Even though Morris was insulted by Dr. Sloper, he endured it silently. Dr. Sloper was surprised at his laudable self-control indeed. He could even admire truly Catherine in front of Dr. Sloper. Dr. Sloper maintained that he would be right about the character of Morris, as he had been right in nineteen cases among twenty. One day Mrs. Almond told him that perhaps Mr. Townsend was the twentieth case. At this time, we thought she might be right, but we doubt whether Mr. Townsend might be really so malignant as Dr. Sloper said. James gradually led up to Dr. Sloper's rightness, for Mrs. Montgomery poured her tears because of the sudden disclosure of the real Morris by Dr. Sloper. Still we had been in suspense, but at last James said that Dr. Sloper was right in observation of Morris. The mist cleared off entirely. James expressed Morris as follows:

...he was in a state of irritation natural to a gentleman of fine parts who had been snubbed in a benevolent attempt to confer a distinction upon a young woman of inferior characteristics, and the insinuating sympathy of this somewhat desiccated matron appeared to offer him no practical relief. He thought her a humbug, and he judged of humbugs with a good deal of confidence. He had listened and made himself agreeable to her at first, in order to get a footing in Washington Square; and at present, he needed all his self-command to be decently civil.... We know that Morris possessed the virtue of self-control, and he had moreover the constant habit of seeking to be agreeable....³²⁾

Morris Townsend was just like Dr. Sloper said before. Eventually Dr. Sloper and James were nearly the same person. Before he died, he knew that Morris was looking out of the corner of his eye. Actually he appeared in front of Catherine after Dr. Sloper's death. While we didn't know James trusted on Dr. Sloper, there were something ambiguous.

CHAPTER III

In James's earlier works the 'international theme' is almost selected. It seemed to be only he that originated an international novel and investigated fertile men, manners, and morals of the two continents from that point. It's more important that he could treat this relationship between the New World and the Old World as a comedy and a tragedy equally. In James's novels, the Americans were treated as if they were innocent inhabitants in the Eden. As they were not baptized with misfortune, they were very feeble when they were out of the Eden of America once. But when he wrote this *Washington Square*, he didn't take up this 'international situation' as one of main themes as in *Roderick Hudson* or *The American*. He focused his attention on the background in New York. He tried to think about America. Especially he set his scenes on Washington Square, where his boyhood had been passed till he became 12 years old. He had been taken to Europe by father with his brother sometimes. He was brought up by both things American and European. He learned and gained many things from both sides, then his eyes were enough keen to discern excellent things. I can't imagine how small New York City was at this time, but his description of it was very simpler and impressed me most. James didn't describe other parts but what he had so far learned in some countries revealed itself in this story. That is, when it comes to thinking of Morris and Catherine, Mr. Townsend seemed to represent the Old World and Miss Sloper seemed to represent the New World. Morris had travelled many countries including France, Great Britain, Italy, and so forth. He was born in New York but it was the stranger place. He knew many things at once good ones and bad ones. He was very handsome, strong, and manly and wanted to live in luxury without working. He aimed at

the girl with great money like a parasite. James thought that the Old World was worse, deteriorated and might destroy the New World with its machinations. Though James didn't mean to use this theme clearly, this thought seemed to prevail in this book. In fact, Morris broke Catherine's heart bitterly. She was purely American, very innocent, humble and simple. The simplicity of her was trifled with by him. James wrote about an American family in 1840's-1850's in this book. It had been half a century since America got rid of the restraints of politics of Europe. At this time America longed for the complete independence economically, financially and in a sense intellectually. America began to be prosperous. But James didn't depict those situations in America at that time.

CONCLUSION

I feel the loneliness of man. To the last the still agony have been felt. Out of this over-familiar materials and old-fashioned plot, James created a story which was original and characteristic.

NOTES

- 1) Michael Swan, *Henry James* (Longmans, Green & Co.), p. 5.
- 2) *The Notebooks of Henry James*, p. 13.
- 3) Clifton Fadiman, Introduction to *Washington Square*, p. 6.
- 4) *Ibid.*, p. 6.
- 5) *Ibid.*, p. 7.
- 6) Henry James, *Washington Square* (The Modern Library, 1950), Chap. XIV, p. 115.
- 7) *Ibid.*, Chap. XIV, p. 115.
- 8) *Ibid.*, Chap. XXI, p. 170.
- 9) *Ibid.*, Chap. XIX, p. 155.
- 10) *Ibid.*, Chap. XXI, p. 170.
- 11) *Ibid.*, Chap. XVIII, p. 147.
- 12) *Ibid.*, Chap. XVIII, p. 152.
- 13) *Ibid.*, Chap. XXIV, p. 193-194.

- 14) *Ibid.*, Chap. XXIV, p. 198.
- 15) *Ibid.*, Chap. II, p. 1.
- 16) *Ibid.*, Chap. I, p. 7.
- 17) Michael Swan, *Henry James* (Arthur Barker LTD. 1952), Chap. II, p. 83.
- 18) *Washington Square* Chap. II, p. 15.
- 19) *Ibid.*, Chap. XV, p. 124.
- 20) *Ibid.*, Chap. XVIII, p. 144.
- 21) *Ibid.*, Chap. XXV, p. 200.
- 22) *Ibid.*, Chap. XXV, p. 201.
- 23) *Ibid.*, Chap. XXV, p. 206.
- 24) *Ibid.*, Chap. XXX, p. 251.
- 25) *Ibid.*, Chap. XXXII, p. 268.
- 26) *Ibid.*, Chap. IV, p. 26.
- 27) *Ibid.*, Chap. IV, p. 35.
- 28) *Ibid.*, Chap. VI, p. 50.
- 29) *Ibid.*, Chap. VI, p. 47.
- 30) *Ibid.*, Chap. VII, p. 62.
- 31) *Ibid.*, Chap. IX, p. 73.
- 32) *Ibid.*, Chap. XV, p. 128.

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